



# The Florida Senate

## Local Funding Initiative Request

### Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LFIR # 1734

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

The ITEM Program offers a multifaceted approach for individuals with autism, pairing in-person mentorships, experiential learning, and innovative technology to address challenges such as lack of employment, social isolation, and struggles with independent living. The program connects people with autism by establishing a platform and community that fosters support, resources, and relationships. Key elements include a user-friendly app that serves as a central hub linking training, resources, and activities. The Hub offers ongoing engagement, inclusivity, and a responsive approach to the evolving needs of individuals with autism. The Hub includes a job portal that lists employment opportunities, skill training modules, mentorship, and an event calendar. The program tailors workshops and experiences, that support specific needs while fostering an inclusive environment, significantly contributing to the participants' overall well-being and success.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted?  Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	250,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
<b>Total State Funds Requested</b>	<b>250,000</b>

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	250,000	20%
<b>Matching Funds</b>		
Federal	750,000	59%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	270,000	21%
<b>Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025</b>	<b>1,270,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

8. Has this project previously received state funding?  Yes

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2023-24	750,000	250,000	27	No

9. Is future funding likely to be requested?  No

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?



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Yes

If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

Paycheck Protection Program: \$450,300 (November 2020), \$396,868 (August 2021)  
 Employee Retention Credit: \$543,260 (May 2023)  
 Salaries, mortgage, interest, and utilities

## Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

### 11. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning    
  Design    
  Construction    
  N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

### 13. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits	Staff Accountant, HR/Grants Management	11,905
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Operational Costs: Other</b>		
Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Professional Services: Training Officer, Software and Web Developers, Researchers; Equipment, MILO Machine and Supplies	238,095
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
<b>Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:</b>		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
<b>Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)</b>		<b>250,000</b>

### 14. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?



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Training young adults with autism to enhance their skills and confidence in the areas of independent living, career exploration, and social competency while preparing them for various situations to ensure safety including interactions with police officers. Progress toward these skills may vary based on the participant's unique abilities and interests which will be addressed through technology and expanded collaborations with health and wellness, education, police, and business partners.

**b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?**

An immersive community-based program to foster personal and professional growth; Training participants and police officers to promote positive and safe interactions; Service delivery at multiple sites for greater access to workshops, life and career coaching, certificate programs, and social events relevant to career exploration, social skills and independent living.

**c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?**

Certification program with workforce skills to pursue a diverse career path including opportunities to start new businesses; 1:1 sessions on social competency, career exploration, and independent living; General sessions on interviewing, self-advocacy skills, social competency, conflict resolution, and positive police interactions; Skill reinforcement through the utilization of technology tools.

**d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?**

101-200 individuals; Target population includes: Jobless persons, economically disadvantaged persons, developmentally disabled, physically disabled, University/College students.

**e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?**

BENEFIT: Improve physical health; METHODOLOGY: YMCA attendance records; annual satisfaction and health improvement surveys.  
 BENEFIT: Enrich cultural experience - exposure to the arts community, theaters, museums, music venues, and libraries to enhance knowledge and appreciation. METHODOLOGY: Attendance records; annual satisfaction surveys.  
 BENEFIT: Improve quality of education - increased interview proficiency and executive functioning skills through technology tools, mentors, and certificate programs. METHODOLOGY: Attendance; course completion; assessments.  
 BENEFIT: Enhance economic self-sufficiency - online and in-person career development through skill training courses, worksite tours, entrepreneurial experiences. METHODOLOGY: Attendance; course completion; assessments.

**f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?**

Possible future funding adjustment

**15. Requester Contact Information**

a. First Name  Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number  Ext.

**16. Recipient Contact Information**

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

For Profit Entity



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- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

d. First Name  Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

#### 17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number